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ABSTRACT

This evaluation of the 1989-90 Bilingual Resource Instruction for the Development of Gainful Employment Skills (Project BRIDGES) in New York City found that the program met most of its objectives. Project BRIDGES, funded under Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, provides the following services to at-risk limited-English-proficient (LEP) students: (1) English as a Second Language (ESL); (2) native language arts (NLA); (3) bilingual content area subjects; and (4) vocational education. The project also included curriculum development, ESL instruction for parents, and opportunities for staff to attend workshops and college courses. Evaluation information included student performance on the Language Assessment Battery (LAB) and attendance and dropout rates. The following conclusions are presented: (1) the project met its objectives for native language arts, bilingual content area subject instruction, attendance, and vocational education; (2) the project partially met its English as a Second Language and dropout prevention objectives; and (3) the project's strength was the provision of individualized instruction and vocational support services. Statistical data are presented in three tables. (FMW)

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OREA Report

BILINGUAL RESOURCE INSTRUCTION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT SKILLS (PROJECT BRIDGES)

Grant Number G008635376

1989-90

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

VD 028 147

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FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

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8/90

BILINGUAL RESOURCE INSTRUCTION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT SKILLS (PROJECT BRIDGES)

SUMMARY

- During 1989-90, Project BRIDGES was fully implemented. Participating students received instruction in English as a Second Language (E.S.L.), Native Language Arts (N.L.A.), content area subjects, and vocational education. The project also offered support services and activities for staff development, curriculum development, and parental involvement.

- Project BRIDGES met its objectives in N.L.A., content area subjects, vocational education, and attendance. The project partially met its E.S.L. and dropout prevention objectives.

In its fourth year of Elementary and Secondary Education Act (E.S.E.A.) Title VII funding, Bilingual Resource Instruction for the Development of Gainful Employment Skills (Project BRIDGES) served 413 students of limited English proficiency (LEP) and 41 English proficient (EP) students at South Shore, Sheepshead Bay, and Franklin D. Roosevelt High Schools in Brooklyn. The project provided E.S.L., N.L.A., and bilingual content area instruction as well as vocational education, staff development, and parental involvement activities.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This report documents the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment's (OREA's) evaluation of Bilingual Resource Instruction for the Development of Gainful Employment Skills (Project BRIDGES). In its fourth year of funding under Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (E.S.E.A.), the project provided students of limited English proficiency (LEP) and a small number of English proficient (EP) students with instruction in English as a Second Language (E.S.L.), Native Language Arts (N.L.A.), bilingual content area subjects, and vocational education. Project BRIDGES' primary goal was to provide individualized instruction and counseling to students at risk of dropping out. The project operated at South Shore, Sheepshead Bay, and Franklin D. Roosevelt High Schools in Brooklyn.

PARTICIPATING STUDENTS

The project served students from Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, Europe, and the United States. Most were recent immigrants from low socioeconomic backgrounds. English and native language competencies varied widely.

The project served 454 students during the year. Of this number, 269 attended both semesters, 93 attended fall only, and 92 attended spring only. (Total fall attendance was 362; total spring attendance was 361.)

STAFF

Title VII funded three site coordinators, all of whom held master's degrees. Two were fluent in Spanish and one in French. Non-Title VII staff included the project director, an administrative assistant, and an educational assistant. The project director held a master's degree and an advanced certificate and was fluent in English, Hebrew, and Spanish. The administrative assistant and educational assistant were both fluent in Spanish.

II. IMPLEMENTATION

ELIGIBILITY

Students qualified for the program if they scored at or below the 40th percentile on the Language Assessment Battery (LAB). In addition, the project admitted students who had poor mathematical skills and were over-age for grade or had long gaps in their schooling. The project assessed each student's skills, planned individual programs for them at the beginning of the school year, and monitored their progress throughout the year.

PROGRAMMING

At each site, the project offered three levels of E.S.L. Beginning E.S.L. was offered three periods daily and intermediate and advanced were offered two periods daily. EP students received instruction in English reading. Sheepshead Bay and Franklin D. Roosevelt High Schools offered N.L.A. classes for one period each day. South Shore High School

students spoke so many different languages that the project could not pull together enough students of one language group to offer N.L.A.

The program provided instruction in content area subjects and vocational education either bilingually or with an E.S.L. methodology. The program also periodically incorporated vocational instruction into E.S.L. classes. Program students attended mainstream courses in art, physical education, and shop.

The project conducted activities for curriculum development, staff development, and parental involvement. It also provided academic and personal counseling and tutoring.

III. OUTCOMES

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

English as a Second Language

- As a result of participating in the program, E.S.L. students will make statistically significant gains in English language proficiency.

Matching data were available for 287 students. The mean gain was 6.5 Normal Curve Equivalents (N.C.E.s) (s.d.=11.6), and analysis indicated a significant improvement ($p<.05$) between

pretest and posttest scores on the LAB. The project met its first E.S.L. objective.

- As a result of participating in the program, English proficient students will show significant gains in English reading achievement.

Matching LAB reading subtest data were available for 38 students. The mean gain was 1.9 N.C.E.s (s.d.=7.5), and analysis indicated that these results were not significant. The project did not meet its second E.S.L. objective.

Native Language Arts

- At least 70 percent of the students enrolled in native language instruction will score at or above the passing criterion of 65.

Data were available for 42 students in the fall semester, 88 percent of whom achieved a passing grade, and 60 students in the spring, 85 percent of whom passed. The project met its N.L.A. objective.

Content Area Subjects

- Students participating in the program will score at or above the passing criterion of 65 in social studies and science at a rate that is equal to or greater than that of similar non-program students.

- Students participating in the program will score at or above the passing criterion of 65 in mathematics at a rate that is equal to or greater than that of similar non-program students.

In both semesters, at least 65 percent of the students in the content area classes of mathematics and social studies earned a passing grade of at least 65.

(See Table 1.) This was equal to or higher than mainstream students rates. In Science, program students' passing rates

TABLE 1

Student Achievement in Content Area Courses

Subject	FALL			SPRING		
	Number of Program Students	Percent Passing	Mainstream Percent Passing	Number of Program Students	Percent Passing	Mainstream Percent Passing
Mathematics	295	67.5	64.3	297	70.0	68.5
Science	225	72.9	62.0	226	71.7	73.0
Social Studies	299	77.9	63.8	307	75.2	74.9

- Program students' achievement rate in all content areas was greater than or equal to that of mainstream students.

were higher than mainstream students' rates in the fall but slightly lower in the spring. The difference, however, was not statistically significant. Project BRIDGES met its content area objective.

Vocational Education

- At least 70 percent of the students enrolled in vocational education courses will score at or above the passing criterion of 65.

Of the 75 students enrolled in vocational education classes in the fall semester, 76 percent passed. Of the 133 students enrolled in the spring, 79 percent passed. The project met its vocational education objective.

NONINSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Attendance

- As a result of participating in the program, students' attendance will be higher than that of mainstream students.

Program students had higher attendance rates than did mainstream students. (See Table 2.)

The project met its attendance objective.

TABLE 2

Attendance Rates of Program and Mainstream Students by School

School	Program		Mainstream
	Number of Students	Percent Attendance	Percent Attendance
Sheepshead Bay	153	82.5	80.9
F.D. Roosevelt	161	85.8	83.3
South Shore	82	88.2	84.6

- Program students had higher attendance rates than did mainstream students.

Dropout Prevention

- Program students will have a lower dropout rate than similar non-program students.

Program students at Sheepshead Bay High School and South Shore High School had a lower dropout rate than did the schools' mainstream students. Program students at Franklin D. Roosevelt High School had a slightly higher dropout rate than the school's mainstream students. (See Table 3.)

The project only partially met its dropout prevention objective.

TABLE 3

Dropout Rates of Program and Mainstream Students by School

School	Program Dropout Rate	Mainstream Dropout Rate
Sheepshead Bay	3.4	5.6
F.D. Roosevelt	5.5	5.0
South Shore	3.4	3.5

- Program students had a lower dropout rate than did mainstream students at both Sheepshead Bay and South Shore High Schools.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Project BRIDGES completed its fourth year of operation, providing instruction in E.S.L., N.L.A., bilingual content area subjects, and vocational education to 454 students, 413 of whom were LEP. The project, which operated at South Shore, Sheepshead Bay, and Franklin D. Roosevelt High Schools in Brooklyn, also offered staff and curriculum development, parental involvement activities, and tutoring.

The project met its N.L.A., content area, vocational education, and attendance objectives. It partially met its E.S.L. and dropout prevention objectives.

The program's strength was its ability to provide at-risk students with the individualized instruction and support services they needed to improve academically and prepare for careers.